

THE OFFICE  
OF THE  
SECRETARY OF  
THE SENATE





Gary Sisco, 29th Secretary of the United States Senate.

*Gary Sisco of Nashville, Tennessee was elected and sworn in as the 29th Secretary of the Senate on October 1, 1996. Mr. Sisco was born and raised in Bolivar, Tennessee. He earned a Bachelor of Science Degree in Civil Engineering from the University of Mississippi in 1967, and a Masters of Science Degree in Administration from the George Washington University in 1970.*

*Mr. Sisco served in the United States Army from 1968 to 1970. In 1970, he rejoined IBM's Memphis, Tennessee, Data Processing Division, where he had been employed prior to entering military service. In 1971, Mr. Sisco joined the staff of U.S. Senator Howard H. Baker, Jr. (TN), where he served in Memphis and in the Washington office. Mr. Sisco left Washington to manage Lamar Alexander's 1974 campaign for governor of Tennessee. He then returned to Washington to serve as Administrative Assistant to U.S. Congressman Robin Beard (TN), a post he held for two years.*

*Mr. Sisco was in the real estate investment business in Nashville from 1977 until 1996, where he was active in many civic, religious, and professional organizations.*

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# THE OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY OF THE SENATE

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As an elected officer of the Senate, the Secretary of the Senate supervises an extensive array of offices and services to expedite the day-to-day operations of the United States Senate. The first Secretary was chosen on April 8, 1789, two days after the Senate achieved its first quorum for business. From the start, the Secretary was responsible for keeping the minutes and records of the Senate, including the records of Senators' election, and for receiving and transmitting official messages to and from the President and the House of Representatives, as well as for purchasing supplies. As the Senate grew to become a major national institution, numerous other duties were assigned to the Secretary, whose jurisdiction now encompasses clerks, curators, and computers; disbursement of payrolls; acquisition of stationery supplies; education of the Senate pages; and the maintenance of public records. Today, the Secretary coordinates two of the largest technology initiatives in Senate history, both designed to bring state-of-the-art efficiency to management of legislative and financial information.

The Secretary's responsibilities include both legislative and administrative functions.

## **Legislative Functions**

The Secretary regularly accompanies the Chaplain into the Senate chamber for the opening of the day's session, and a seat beside the presiding officer is reserved for the Secretary. Every act passed by the Senate is examined and signed by the Secretary. In certain parliamentary circumstances, the Secretary may also preside over the Senate, the most recent occurrence being at the opening of the Eightieth Congress in 1947 when the office of Vice President was vacant. On that occasion, Secretary of the Senate Leslie Biffle took the chair until the Senate could elect a President Pro Tempore.

The first Secretary took the minutes of Senate proceedings, a function continued today by the Journal Clerk and Executive Clerk. After the *Congressional Record* evolved into an official publication, the Secretary came to supervise the Senate's Reporters of Debates and preparation of the Daily Digest. Among other Senate floor staff who report to the Secretary are the Parliamentarian, Bill Clerk, Legislative Clerk, and Enrolling Clerk.

## **Administrative Functions**

The first Secretary purchased the quill pens, ink, and parchment needed by eighteenth-century Senators. Modern Secretaries of the Senate have responsibility for the Senate Stationery Room, a multimillion-dollar retail operation that keeps Senators' offices supplied. From the beginning, the Secretary served as the Senate's disbursing officer, paying Senators their original salary of six dollars a day plus travel expenses. As the Senate grew, a separate Financial Clerk was appointed under the Secretary's jurisdiction.

In recognition of the immediate and historical significance of Senate bills, resolutions, hearings, and reports, the Secretary oversees the Office of Printing and Document Services, the Office of

Senate Security (which maintains classified documents), the Senate Library, the Office of Senate Curator, and the Senate Historical Office. The Secretary also maintains the Office of Interparliamentary Services to provide support for those interparliamentary conferences in which the Senate participates and to assist Senators in international travel. Also under the Secretary's direction, the Office of Public Records collects and makes publicly available documents relating to campaign finance, financial ethics, foreign travel, and lobbying.

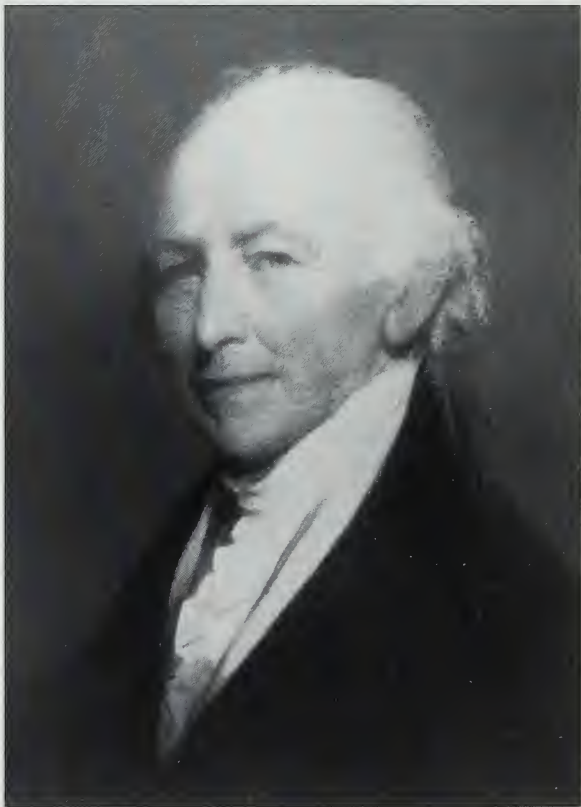
In 1789 the Secretary was authorized to hire "one principal clerk." This Principal Clerk, or Chief Clerk, for many years served primarily as a reading clerk on the Senate floor. But during the 1960s, in response to the Secretary's growing administrative duties, the position evolved into that of Assistant Secretary of the Senate, who oversees the administration of the Secretary's Office, including computers and the Secretary's web site. The Assistant Secretary also performs the functions of the Secretary in his or her absence. During the 1960s, under the leadership of Francis Valeo, staff positions under the Secretary of the Senate were redefined from patronage to professional status, a trend continued by Valeo's successors.

### **Some Notable Secretaries**

A position of great trust and responsibility, the Senate secretaryship has been held by a long line of distinguished individuals. Samuel Allyne Otis, the first Secretary of the Senate, had previously been Speaker of the Massachusetts legislature and a member of the Continental Congress. Otis held the post of Secretary for twenty-five years, never missing a day that the Senate was in session. General Anson McCook of New York, a former House member and one of the "fighting McCooks" of the Civil War, served as Secretary,

as have two former U.S. Senators—Charles Cutts of New Hampshire and Walter Lowrie of Pennsylvania. Other former House members who have held the post are William Cox (NC) and Charles Bennett (NY). During the Ninety-ninth Congress (1985-1987), Jo-Anne Coe became the first woman to serve as Secretary.

It has not been unusual for Secretaries of the Senate to have devoted their entire careers to the Senate. Several began as pages, including Edwin Halsey, who served throughout the dramatic New Deal years; Leslie Biffle, a close confidant of President Harry Truman; Carl Loeffler and J. Mark Trice, Secretaries during the Eightieth and Eighty-third congresses; and Walter J. Stewart, Secretary from 1987 to 1994.



*Samuel Allyne Otis, the Senate's first Secretary, served from 1789 to 1814.*



# LEGISLATIVE OFFICES UNDER THE SECRETARY OF THE SENATE



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The *Parliamentarian* advises the Presiding Officer, Senators and their staffs, committee staffs, Representatives and their staffs, administration officials, the media, and members of the general public on all matters requiring an interpretation of the Standing Rules of the Senate, the precedents of the Senate, unanimous consent agreements, and provisions of public law affecting the proceedings of the Senate. In the name of the Presiding Officer, the Parliamentarian refers to the appropriate Senate committees all legislation, messages, communications, reports from the executive branch, and petitions and memorials from state legislatures and private citizens.

The *Bill Clerk* records actions of the Senate, keeps an authoritative historical record of Senate business, enters daily legislative activities and votes into the automated legislative status system (LEGIS), and assigns numbers to all bills and resolutions.

The *Legislative Clerk* reads aloud bills, resolutions, conference reports, amendments, and other material when directed by the Presiding Officer, calls the roll for quorums and recorded (yea and nay) votes, and prepares the *Calendar of Business* for each

daily session of the Senate. In addition, the Legislative Clerk maintains official copies of measures pending before the Senate and receives all proposed and agreed-upon amendments.

The *Journal Clerk* records the minutes of the daily legislative proceedings of the Senate and prepares them for publication in the *Senate Journal*, as required by Article I, section 5 of the Constitution. The Journal Clerk also prepares a history of bills and resolutions for inclusion in the printed *Journal*.

The *Executive Clerk* prepares an accurate record of actions taken by the Senate during executive sessions (proceedings on nominations and treaties) which is published as the *Executive Journal* at the end of each session of Congress. The Executive Clerk also prepares the *Executive Calendar*, which



Senate Finance Committee Chairman Walter George watches Secretary of the Senate Edwin Halsey sign legislation in 1944.



is printed daily when any nominations, treaties, or resolutions pertaining to executive business are pending before the Senate. The Executive Clerk also prepares all nomination and treaty advice and consent resolutions for transmittal to the President.

The *Enrolling Clerk* proofreads and prepares for printing all Senate-passed legislation prior to its transmittal to the House of Representatives, the National Archives, the Secretary of State, the United States Claims Court, and the White House. The Enrolling Clerk physically transmits all Senate messages to the House of Representatives and arranges for delivery of all enrolled bills and resolutions to the White House.

The *Official Reporters of Debates* prepare and edit for publication in the *Congressional Record* a substantially verbatim report of the proceedings of the Senate and serve as liaison for all Senate personnel on matters relating to the content of the *Record*.

The *Daily Digest* section of the *Congressional Record* provides a concise accounting of all official actions taken by the Senate on a particular day. All Senate hearings and business meetings (including joint meetings and conferences) are scheduled through the Daily Digest, published in the *Congressional Record*, and entered into the automated legislative status system (LEGIS) hearings file. Meeting outcomes are also published by the Daily Digest in the *Record* each day.

The *Captioning Services Office* provides real-time closed captioning of Senate floor proceedings for the deaf and hearing-impaired community. Real-time captioning is the live electronic subtitling of the audio portion of a television program.

# ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICES UNDER THE SECRETARY OF THE SENATE



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The *Disbursing Office* compiles Senate budget estimates for presentation to the Committee on Appropriations, maintains and disburses all Senate appropriated funds and all Senate payrolls, interprets and carries out all matters related to budgeting, appropriations, compensation, payroll deductions, retirement, life and health insurance, and other employee benefits authorized for Senators and staff.

The *Printing and Document Services Office* serves as liaison to the Government Printing Office for the Senate's official printing. It is responsible for preparing, coordinating, scheduling, and delivering all Senate documents—including legislation, hearings, committee prints, and miscellaneous publications—as well as for assigning publication numbers. The office also provides printed copies of all legislation and public laws to the Senate and to the public. Additional functions include ordering all blank paper, envelopes, and letterhead for the Senate, and preparing page counts of all Senate hearings in order to compensate commercial reporting companies for the preparation of transcripts.

The *Stationery Room* is a nonprofit merchandising outlet that acts as purchasing agent for stationery supplies and maintains adequate inventories to meet Senate office needs.

The *Senate Gift Shop* offers Members, staff, and the general public the opportunity to purchase Senate memorabilia and gift items.

The *Interparliamentary Services Office* is responsible for administrative, financial, and protocol functions for all interparliamentary conferences in which the Senate participates and for special delegations authorized by the leadership. The office also provides appropriate assistance to other Senate delegations to foreign countries.

The *Senate Security Office* is responsible for the administration of classified national security information and personnel, communications, and computer security programs to protect classified information in Senate offices and committees. It



For two days in 1947, Secretary of the Senate Leslie Biffle presided over the Senate.

serves as the Senate's liaison to the Executive Branch in matters relating to classified national security information.

The *Public Records Office* receives, processes, and maintains for public inspection records, reports, and other documents filed with the Secretary involving the Federal Election Campaign Act, the Ethics in Government Act, the Lobbying Disclosure Act, the Mutual Security Act, and the Senate Code of Official Conduct. As provided by various Senate rules, it also handles public financial disclosure, reimbursed travel reports, registration of mass mailings, political fund designations, and supervisors' reports on individuals performing Senate services. The office reviews the filings of and provides guidance to registrants under the Lobbying Disclosure Act.

The *Chief Counsel for Employment* provides legal advice to, and represents, Senate offices in employment law matters and lawsuits under the Congressional Accountability Act, which brings the Senate under eleven federal laws regulating the employer-employee relationship.

The *Senate Library* is a legislative and general reference library that provides both traditional and computerized information services and maintains a comprehensive collection of congressional, governmental, and other publications for the use of Senate offices and the media.

The *Conservation and Preservation Office* develops and coordinates programs directly related to the preservation of Senate records and materials for which the Secretary of the Senate has statutory authority. Initiatives include mass deacidification, conservation of books and documents, collection surveys, and contingency planning for disaster response and recovery.

The *Office of the Senate Curator*, under the direction of the Senate Commission on Art, administers the museum programs of the Senate for the Capitol and Senate office buildings. The Curator and staff suggest acquisitions, develop exhibitions, and produce publications. The office studies, identifies, arranges, protects, preserves, and records the historical paintings, sculpture, and furnishings in the Senate Collection. The office also exercises supervisory responsibility for those chambers in the Capitol under the jurisdiction of the Senate Commission on Art.

The *Senate Historical Office* collects and provides information on important events, dates, statistics, precedents, and historical comparisons of current and past activities of the Senate for use by Senators, staff, the media, scholars, and the public. The office advises Senators and committees on the cost-effective disposition of their noncurrent office files, assists researchers seeking access to Senate records, and conducts a program of oral history interviews with retired senior Senate staff. The office maintains extensive collections of photographs and biographical files on all former members.

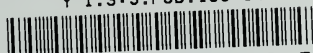
The *Senate Page School* serves all appointed Senate pages. It exists to provide a smooth transition from and to the students' home schools, providing students with a sound program, both academically and experientially, during their service to the Senate.

# Secretaries of the Senate

Name	Home State	Dates of Service
(1) Samuel Allyne Otis	Massachusetts	1789–1814
(2) Charles Cutts	New Hampshire	1814–1825
(3) Walter Lowrie	Pennsylvania	1825–1836
(4) Asbury Dickins	North Carolina	1836–1861
(5) John W. Forney	Pennsylvania	1861–1868
(6) George C. Gorham	California	1868–1879
(7) John C. Burch	Tennessee	1879–1881
(8) Anson G. McCook	New York	1883–1893
(9) William Ruffin Cox	North Carolina	1893–1900
(10) Charles G. Bennett	New York	1900–1913
(11) James M. Baker	South Carolina	1913–1919
(12) George A. Sanderson	Ohio	1919–1925
(13) Edwin Pope Thayer	Indiana	1925–1933
(14) Edwin A. Halsey	Virginia	1933–1945
(15) Leslie Biffle	Arkansas	1945–1947
(16) Carl A. Loeffler	Pennsylvania	1947–1949
(17) Leslie Biffle	Arkansas	1949–1953
(18) J. Mark Trice	District of Columbia	1953–1955
(19) Felton M. Johnston	Mississippi	1955–1965
(20) Emery L. Frazier	Kentucky	1966
(21) Francis R. Valeo	New York	1966–1977
(22) J. Stanley Kimmitt	Montana	1977–1981
(23) William F. Hildenbrand	Pennsylvania	1981–1985
(24) Jo-Anne L. Coe	California	1985–1987
(25) Walter J. Stewart	Delaware	1987–1994
(26) Martha S. Pope	Connecticut	1994–1995
(27) Sheila P. Burke	California	1995
(28) Kelly D. Johnston	Oklahoma	1995–1996
(29) Gary Sisco	Tennessee	1996–



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